

## Stages and the Kentucky Assessment Process

### OVERVIEW

Stages includes two major software components: (a) informal assessment software and (b) curriculum software. Stages informal assessment software is instructional in nature, providing activities with constructive feedback and opportunities for the learner to explore and choose. Stages curriculum software is a collection of interactive daily instructional programs appropriate for learners at each Stage.

Stages software enhances the Kentucky alternate assessment process because:

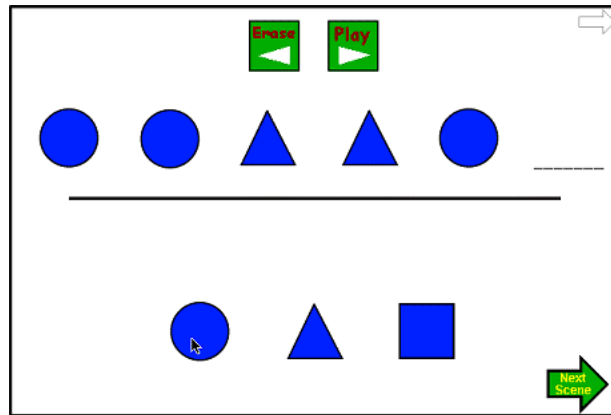
1. **Stages provides access to the general education curriculum.**
2. **Stages generates evidence of skill achievement for the learner's portfolio.**
3. **Stages Observation Forms increase the objectivity and efficiency of observations.**
4. **Stages provides learners with the opportunity for increased independence.**
5. **Stages assists the learner's IEP team with selecting assistive technology and assessment tools.**

#### **1. Stages provides access to the general education curriculum.**

Stages provides activities that cover many basic IEP skills that the learner with severe disabilities can master. Please refer to the section, "How Stages Correlates with Sample IEP Basic Skills" for examples of matching. Also, Stages activities provide benchmarks of learner achievement in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics areas of the Core Content for Assessment, prior to assessment at Grades 4 and 5. The second section, "How Stages Correlates with Core Content for Assessment," shows how Stages provides access to those skills.

#### **2. Stages generates of skill achievement for the learner's portfolio.**

During Stages software activities, the instructor can print directly from any screen to capture a student-created product. At the end of each activity, a report with instructional data about the time spent, choices made, response accuracy or work product, input method, prompt type/frequency, and time/date stamp are displayed with the learner's name. The instructor may wish to then print that screen or save the information as a text-format electronic file.



Example screen shot from Stage Four: Create Patterns

**3. Stages Observation Forms increase the objectivity and efficiency of observations.**

Observation guidelines and forms in the Stages kits help the IEP team make the most out of an activity session. The data-gathering features of the software enable the observer to focus on noting the learner's behavior and thinking-out-loud responses. Two adults from the instructional team can work together: one adult can encourage the learner and the other can note valuable data about behaviors without being noticed by the learner. Alternatively if a video or still camera is available, it may be directed at the learner and the computer monitor to discreetly record interactions and other behaviors while one adult coaches. During the sessions, the learner will be less conscious of her performance being recorded, making her responses more candid. Over time, the collected data will provide evidence that the instructional team needs to build a complete picture of the learner's skill achievement.

**4. Stages provides learners with the opportunity for increased independence.**

The feedback in Stages activities is encouraging and rewarding, providing a relaxed setting for exploring topics and demonstrating skills with minimal supervision. Many Stages activities include accessible choice-making opportunities. Activities include scenarios from various community settings.

**5. Stages assists the learner's IEP team with selecting assistive technology and assessment tools.**

An objective of Stages software is to provide several options for input methods and other settings so that the learner's instructor, parents, and others in the IEP team can determine his ideal learning and communication environment. Different devices, auditory feedback, speeds and prompts are among the variables that help the instructor create an environment that corresponds with the motor skills of the learner.

## SUMMARY

Stages augments the Kentucky alternative assessment cycle. Together, the Stages set of activities and recommended curriculum practice software provide a comprehensive benchmark tool. Stages activities are designed to assist the instructional/IEP team in collecting products for the learner's assessment portfolio, determine assessment strategy, and discover the learner's abilities and thinking approach.

## How Stages Correlates with Sample IEP Basic Skills<sup>1</sup>

### Sample Basic Skills Matching

#### Telling Time

##### **Related Stages Assessment Activities:**

Stage Six: Explore and Assess: Telling Time

- In Stage Six *Telling Time* activities, the learner is presented with digital and analog clocks displaying times. The computer reads the time while displaying the text, *e.g. five o'clock*. The learner is then asked to identify clocks displaying the time spoken (auditory prompt) and/or printed on the screen (visual and/or multisensory prompts). Correct responses and distracter targets are coordinated to help the instructor determine patterns in incorrect learner responses.

#### Reading Sight Words

##### **Related Stages Assessment Activities:**

Stage Five: Reading: Meaning, Context

- In Stage Five *Meaning*, the learner is asked to identify illustrations that show the meaning of a printed word displayed on the screen and spoken. The words are part of the Dolch sight word list at five levels: PrePrimer, Primer, First, Second, and Third Grades. *Context* includes some of the most frequently used sight words.

#### Addition and Subtraction

##### **Related Stages Assessment Activities:**

Stage Five: Math: Math Facts (+, -), Word Problems (+, -)

- In Stage Five *Math Facts*, the learner is presented with addition and subtraction problems with and without regrouping. *Word Problems* includes an 'Explore' section to refresh the learner about how to solve a word problem.

*In addition to the above skill areas, Stages correlates with Core Content for Reading, Writing, and Mathematics Assessment. For matching, please refer to the next section.*

<sup>1</sup> Information from the Kentucky Implementation Manual for the Program of Studies, Kentucky Department of Education, 1998.

Source: <http://www.kde.state.ky.us/oapd/curric/Publications/ImplementationManual/>

Accessed September 10, 2002.

## How Stages Correlates with Core Content for Assessment<sup>2</sup>

### Reading

**RD-E-x.0.5** Recognize the purpose of capitalization, punctuation, [boldface type, italics, and indentations used by the author].

**Related Stages Assessment Activities:**

*Stage Seven: Making Sentences: Spelling and Grammar*

- *Spelling and Grammar* is a collection of different activities including: Spelling, Homonyms, Capitalization, Noun-Verb Agreement, Pronoun Use, Word Order, and a Custom option. Lists of words/sentences may be saved for future sessions.

**RD-E-1.0.10** Connect literature to students' lives and real world issues.

**RD-E-2.0.10** Connect the content of a passage to students' lives and/or real world issues.

**Related Stages Assessment Activities:**

*Stage Six: Stories: Cody, Mitchell, Meg, Adam, Ryan*

- Stage Six *Stories* present short fictional passages about real people. The instructor can make observations about the learner's behavior during listening.

**RD-E-4.0.6** Locate and apply information for authentic purposes.

**Related Stages Assessment Activities:**

*Stage Three: All Activities*

*Stage Five: Mathematics: Charts and Graphs*

*All Stages: All Activities*

- In Stage Three, the learner can choose a desired activity and also make choices from items on the screen in response to a prompt. Mayer-Johnson PCS Symbols are used together with verbal and written prompts.
- In general (all other Stages), the observation forms help the instructor systematically record the learner's response to the directions given by each activity.
- *Charts and Graphs* gives the learner an opportunity to apply knowledge of common graphic features to locate facts in order to answer questions.

<sup>2</sup> Information from the Kentucky Core Content for Assessment, version 3.0, September 1999. Division of curriculum Development, Kentucky Department of Education.

Source: <http://www.kde.state.ky.us/oapd/curric/corecontent/>

Accessed September 10, 2002.

## Writing

- WR-E-1.2** *Personal writing* focuses on the life experiences of the writer. Personal forms in the portfolio may include a personal narrative (focusing on the significance of a single event) or memoir (focusing on the significance of the relationship of the writer with a particular person, place, animal, or thing).
- WR-E-1.4** *Transactive writing* is informative/persuasive writing that presents ideas and information for authentic audiences to accomplish realistic purposes like those students will encounter in their lives. In transactive writing, students will write in a variety of forms.
- WR-E-1.4** *Literary writing* artfully communicates with the reader about the human condition. Literary forms in the portfolio include poems, short stories, and scripts.

### ***Related Stages Assessment Activities:***

*Stage Seven:*      *Making Sentences:* Building Sentences, Writing Sentences  
                              *Making Stories*

- Using Stage Seven *Building Sentences*, the learner can form sentences using a word wall. The learner who is able to use an onscreen accessible keyboard, regular keyboard, or alternative keyboard can write sentences in response to instructor-written prompts in *Writing Sentences*.
- Using *Making Stories*, the learner can write multiple sentences with the aid of a photograph or imported graphic as a prompt. The text-to-speech feature gives the learner an opportunity to play back what is written. *Making Stories* also gives the learner a way to express feelings related to life experiences, respond to a story, or independently create samples of written work such as letters, poems and journals. The report displays settings such as time, date, font size and style.
- These activities can also help the instructor determine an appropriate communication device for the learner.

## Mathematics

### Number/Computation

#### Concepts

**MA-E-1.1.1** Whole numbers, fractions [mixed numbers,] and decimals [through thousandths].

**MA-E-1.1.2** The operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

#### Skills

**MA-E-1.2.1** Read, write, [and rename] whole numbers.

**MA-E-1.2.2** Add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers using a variety of methods.

#### *Related Stages Assessment Activities:*

*Stage Four:* Math Readiness: Number ID, Counting

*Stage Five:* Math: Math Facts (+, -, x, ÷), Word Problems (+, -, x, ÷), Fractions

*Problem Solving:* Number Guess

- Stage Four *Number ID* gives the learner an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of number words in the context of a telephone key pad or an elevator scene. Numbers from 0 to 10 are included. *Counting* includes an accessible number line and pictures as virtual manipulatives.
- Stage Five *Math Facts* activities give the learner an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the basic operations with and without regrouping. The *Word Problems* activities ask the learner to solve problems with and without the aid of diagrams on the screen. In *Fractions*, the learner selects the correct number of sections of a whole object to display the correct fraction. The learner also selects the correct fraction of objects out of a group of objects. *Number Guess* gives the learner an opportunity to demonstrate the ability to compare numbers, given feedback about relative magnitude (“That number is too high/low”).

### Geometry/Masurement

#### Concepts

**MA-E-2.1.2** Basic two-dimensional shapes including circles, triangles [(right, equilateral), all quadrilaterals, pentagons, hexagons, and octagons].

#### *Related Stages Assessment Activities:*

*Stage Four:* Explore and Assess: Shape ID

- Stage Four *Shape ID* gives the learner an opportunity to identify two-dimensional shapes in drawings or photographs in scenes and isolation.

#### Skills

**MA-E-2.2.1** Sort objects and compare attributes.

**MA-E-2.2.9** Use measurements to describe and compare attributes of objects.

#### *Related Stages Assessment Activities:*

*Stage Two:* Attributes

*Stage Three:* Category Identification: Animals, Clothing, Vehicles

*Stage Four:* Math Readiness: Estimating

*Stage Five:* Problem Solving: Mystery Shape

- Stage Two introduces the learner to the attributes of size and color using simple animations and short passages. The learner can participate in this activity in preparation for assessment.
- *Category Identification* activities in Stage Three ask the learner to sort familiar objects into categories.
- Stage Four *Estimating* asks the learner to compare objects in a scene using relative size vocabulary such as ‘biggest/smallest.’
- In Stage Five *Mystery Shape* the learner compares the attributes of two-dimensional shapes in order to deduce the correct choice.

- MA-E-2.2.5** Use nonstandard and standard units to measure weight, length, perimeter, area (figures that can be divided into rectangular shapes), and angles.
- MA-E-2.2.6** Use standard units to measure volume of rectangular prisms, [liquid capacity,] money, time, [and temperature].

**Related Stages Assessment Activities:**

*Stage Five:* Math: Geometry

*Stage Six:* Explore: Money Orientation

Assess: Money Identification, Counting Money, Money Equivalents

- Stage Five *Geometry* asks the learner questions about perimeter, area, and volume with the help of on-screen diagrams showing non-conventional units such as footsteps, tiles, and cubes.
- In Stage Six *Money Orientation*, the learner is presented with coins up to 25¢ and bills up to \$20. In *Money Equivalents* the learner is asked to identify equivalent amounts of currency that adds up to given amounts. Realistic scenarios are part of the money assessment to help the learner relate the concepts to life activities.

### Probability/Statistics

**Concepts**

- MA-E-3.1.3** The process of using data to answer questions (e.g., pose a question, plan, collect data, organize and display data, interpret data to answer questions).

**Skills**

**MA-E-3.2.2** [Collect, organize,] and describe data (e.g., drawings, tables, charts).

**MA-E-3.2.3** [Construct and] interpret displays of data (e.g., line graph, bar graph, pictograph, line plot, simple Venn diagram, table).

**MA-E-3.2.4** Interpret circle graphs.

**MA-E-3.2.5** [Make predictions and] draw conclusions based on data.

**Related Stages Assessment Activities:**

*Stage Five:* Math: Charts and Graphs

- The Stage Five *Charts and Graphs* activity includes bar graphs, line graphs, and pie charts. Familiar topics such as favorite snacks and animals help make the activities engaging for the learner.

### Algebraic Thinking

**Skills**

**MA-E-4.2.1** Find rules for, extend, and create patterns.

**Related Stages Assessment Activities:**

*Stage Four:* Math Readiness: Explore Patterns, Continue/Fill-In Patterns, Create Patterns

- Stage Four gives the learner an opportunity to first observe simple repeating sequences of geometric shapes, sound, and color in *Explore Patterns*. The learner is asked to complete sequences of shapes by choosing the correct shape in *Continue/Fill-In Patterns*. Finally, *Create Patterns* gives the learner a chance to compose sequences based on shape, color and sound.